



4905 5th Ave. Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363  
Comm. (334) 255-3770 Fax (334) 255-2266  
<https://safety.army.mil>

## Play by the Rules!

**Art Powell**  
**Strategic Communication Directorate**  
**U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center**  
**Fort Rucker, Ala.**

Playing hard can be fun and rewarding, but indiscipline and too much enthusiasm can take a Soldier out of duty status or put Family members in a world of hurt.

Physical training and sports are the second-most hazardous activities across our Army, according to figures presented by Brig. Gen. William T. Wolf at the recent Army Senior Safety Symposium.

Wolf, director of Army Safety and commanding general, U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center, urged Army leaders to focus on keeping their Soldiers and Family members safe while exercising.

“We encourage our Soldiers and Families to enjoy off-duty sports and physical training, but everyone needs to be a leader and take steps to avoid acts of indiscipline and rule-breaking that cause injury,” Wolf explained.

According to survey data from the U.S. Army Public Health Command, more than 50,000 sports injuries requiring medical care are reported among Soldiers every year.

Any sports activity can cause injury, but basketball is the leading injury producer in the Army, said Maj. Vance McNulty, Womack Army Medical Center, Fort Bragg, N.C. Although Soldiers are susceptible to a variety of injuries while playing basketball, the lower extremities — specifically the knee and ankle — are most commonly affected.

Just like more “conventional” workout regimens, safely participating in team sports requires warming up properly, knowing your limits, staying hydrated and clearing the play area of trip hazards.

Soldiers should also remember sports injuries aren’t limited to adults. The number of children and teens participating in organized sports and other recreational activities is huge, and so is the number of injuries they suffer.

Children’s Hospital Boston reports that in the United States, about 3.5 million children are hurt in sports accidents every year, with one in four injuries considered serious. Soldiers should talk to their children about sports safety and supervise them accordingly.

For additional information on sports injuries, visit <https://safety.army.mil>, <http://phc.amedd.army.mil> or <http://www.healthychildren.org>.

-30-



**ARMY SAFE  
IS ARMY STRONG**

